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TO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN NIACT IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 285461

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: CASC, OREP (RYAN, LEO) GY

SUBJECT: CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S VISIT TO GUYANA

REFS: STATE 27716; STATE 284988

1. REPRESENTATIVES OF L, SCS AND ARA/CAR MET THIS MORNING WITH J. SCOLLART AND J. SPEIER, STAFF MEMBERS WHO WILL BE ACCOMPANYING CODEL. L REPRESENTATIVE EXPLAINED IN SOME DETAIL THAT CODEL WOULD HAVE NO OFFICIAL AUTHORITY OR STATUS IN GUYANA AND THAT NEITHER CODEL OR EMBASSY HAD A LEGAL RIGHT TO DEMAND ACCESS TO ANCITS IN GUYANA. SCS REPRESENTATIVES EXPLAINED THAT CONSULAR OFFICERS HAD CONTACTED P.T. MEMBERS IN THE PAST AND HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN INVESTIGATING PRIOR ALLEGATIONS, BUT THAT THESE CONTACTS HAD BEEN STRICTLY ON A VOLUNTARY, CONSENSUAL BASIS. ANY CONTACTS BETWEEN CODEL AND P.T. MEMBERS WOULD HAVE TO BE ARRANGED ON THE SAME BASIS. IT WAS FURTHER EXPLAINED TO STAFFERS THAT GOG MIGHT, AS A MATTER OF COMITY, FACILITATE EFFORTS TO MAKE CONTACT WITH P.T. MEMBERS, BUT THAT IT WAS UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO DO SO. STAFFERS WERE INFORMED THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD GOG FORCE P.T. TO GRANT ACCESS TO CODEL.

2. L REPRESENTATIVES EXPLAINED THAT PRIVACY ACT PROHIBITED THE DISCLOSURE OF EMBASSY FILES ON INDIVIDUALS. DISCLOSURE IS PERMITTED PURSUANT TO AN OFFICIAL REQUEST FROM A COMMITTEE OR SUBCOMMITTEE OF CONGRESS (AS DISTINGUISHED FROM A REQUEST FROM AN INDIVIDUAL CONGRESSMAN). IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT THE COMMITTEE REQUEST MUST BE IN WRITING, MUST IDENTIFY WITH AS MUCH SPECIFICITY AS POSSIBLE THE INFORMATION SOUGHT, MUST EXPLAIN WHY THE INFORMATION IS NEEDED, AND MUST CONTAIN ASSURANCES THAT ANY DOCUMENTS DISCLOSED TO THE COMMITTEE BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE AND NOT PASSED ON TO OTHER PERSONS. SCOLLART INQUIRED WHETHER ANY P.T. MEMBERS HAD WAIVED THEIR RIGHTS UNDER THE PRIVACY ACT. SCS EXPLAINED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME WAIVERS, BUT THAT THESE PERMITTED DISCLOSURE ONLY TO SPECIFIED PERSONS, USUALLY RELATIVES.

3. L REPRESENTATIVE BRIEFLY DISCUSSED FOI ACT, NOTING THAT ALTHOUGH DOCUMENTS REQUIRED UNDER THAT ACT ARE EXEMPTED FROM PRIVACY ACT, THE SIXTH EXEMPTION TO THE FOI PROTECTED DOCUMENTS THE DISCLOSURE OF WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE AN UNWARRANTED INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY AND THUS WOULD GENERALLY AUTHORIZE WITHHOLDING OF FILES ON INDIVIDUALS.

4. RE: DISCUSSION IN STATE 27716, DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN INFORMED THAT NO CONCERNED RELATIVES WILL ACCOMPANY CODEL BUT THAT AS MANY AS 10 RELATIVES ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN GEORGETOWN DURING CODEL VISIT. ALTHOUGH THESE RELATIVES WILL HAVE NO OFFICIAL CONNECTION WITH CODEL, CONTACT BETWEEN THEM AND CODEL SHOULD BE EXPECTED. VANCE

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